



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

---

---

*A LETTER to the Rev. HENRY USSHER, D. D. from  
the Rev. JAMES A. HAMILTON, D. D. M. R. I. A.  
giving an Account of PARHELIA seen at Cookstown  
September 24, 1783.*

---

CARIFF, JANUARY 20, 1786.

DEAR SIR,

I BEG leave, through you, to communicate to the Royal Irish Academy, the following very curious optical phænomena which I observed September 24, 1783, at Cookstown, where I then resided, and paid a pretty regular attention to astronomical and meteorological observations. Read February 6, 1786.

WEDNESDAY, September 24th, 1783, as I was preparing to observe the sun passing the meridian, before the 1st limb touched the centre wire, it was obscured by a dark well-defined cloud, about 10° in diameter. Upon going to the door of the transit room, to see if it was likely soon to pass off the disk of the sun, I observed the following phænomena:

FROM

FROM the western edge of the cloud issued a luminous arc parallel to the horizon, perfectly well defined, extending exactly to the northern meridian; it was about 30' broad, white, and ended in a blunted termination. On it were two parhelia; the nearest to the sun displaying the prismatic colours; the remote one white, and both ill defined. In a short time the cloud had passed off, and shewed the luminous almicantar, reaching perfect to the true sun. While things were thus situated, I measured with an accurate sextant the distances of the parhelia; I found the coloured one  $26^{\circ}$ , the remoter one  $90^{\circ}$ , from the true sun. Just as I had done this, a new and prismatic circle furrounded the sun, immediately within the prismatic parhelion. And now another coloured parhelion appeared on the eastern board. The sextant with its face up and down, exactly measured this and the former at the original distance of  $26^{\circ}$ ; the luminous almicantar still remaining perfect. In about ten or twelve minutes, whitish hazy clouds came on, and obscured all these uncommon appearances. I did not observe that the atmospherical phenomena before or after were at all uncommon. The wind a light breeze at S. S. W. Bar. 29,6 rising. Thermometer  $55^{\circ}$ .

Plate III.  
Fig. 1.

S. M. represents the south meridian.

N. M. north meridian.

P. P. the prismatic circle, with two prismatic suns or parhelia, at  $26^{\circ}$  distance on each side the true sun.

W. the white parhelion, at  $90^{\circ}$  distance from the true sun.

L. A. the luminous almicantar.

And H O. the horizon.